

## IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly add new claims 17-20 below.

1 17. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the mining machine further includes an  
2 extender operatively coupled to the advancing machine, and wherein said bracing the advancing  
3 machine includes bracing the advancing machine independently of the extender.

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1 18. (New) A method according to claim 4, wherein the mining machine further includes an  
2 extender operatively coupled to the advancing machine, and wherein said bracing the advancing  
3 machine includes bracing the advancing machine independently of the extender.

1 19. (New) A method according to claim 7, wherein the mining machine further includes an  
2 extender operatively coupled to the advancing machine, and wherein said bracing the advancing  
3 machine includes bracing the advancing machine independently of the extender.

1 20. (New) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the brace is fixedly mounted on the  
2 advancing machine.